

## Focus Group on Quality Teaching/Schools

### Big Ideas for Education Reform

1. **The Single School Complex** – Elementary Feeder Schools to Middle Schools to a High School – is the most useful and promising “unit” of reform. The individual classroom, or teacher or principal or school, or school level are important parts of the whole, but too narrow individually. The School Complex represents the complete P-20 pathway, as children move from preschool to K-6 to Middle School to High School and on to college.
2. **The Smaller Learning Community** – smaller schools within schools (SWS) (vertical), and smaller core subject teacher/student units within those SWS (horizontal) – have shown the most promise in research and real world experiences to positively impact student learning. Vertical SWS might also be thematic or career-oriented, such as a performing arts theme, or a health academy.
3. **Campus learning time** (a day or a week in the life of a student) as well as the year-long school schedule (length and number of vacations, etc) can be better managed to maximize classroom learning, active engagement on campus, a more complete curriculum, remedial learning times, teacher and administrator professional development, etc. A longer school day/or week for students (without imposing more work on faculty) and a coordinated yearly schedule for all schools within a complex can make a difference in what and how we educate.
4. **Accountability/Evaluation** of public schools needs to go beyond test scores to assess the effectiveness of entire schools and entire school complexes. Creations of the “ideal” elementary, middle, and high school (a la Oregon) with most promising practices, etc. can contribute to a clearer concept of system wide goals.
5. **A logical, sequential K-12 curriculum** delivered by all the schools within a single complex, with appropriate texts and other materials, in-service support and stability over time, can make a significant positive impact on student achievement.

#### Related Ideas from other Groups:

1. **A Bill of Rights for the Student body**, which incorporates the expectations of competent & effective teachers who are able to coordinate their learning and project schedules; a safe and nurturing school environment; classrooms equipped for learning that are physically comfortable (cool, quiet and odorless); hygienic restroom facilities and sufficient time to use the restrooms.
2. **A budget process** that facilitates the ability of policy makers and evaluators to examine the school complex as a whole, and an entire school.
3. **A primary community partner organization** to receive private sector grants & coordinate activities throughout the complex.
4. **An Education A Council on Education Data and Accountability Indicators (CEDAI)** should be created to access and interpret information collected by the Hawaii State Department of Education and other sources on education programs and student achievement locally and nationally.

